



MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Peter Burgelis - District 15

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, June 23

Contact: Eddie Cullen, 414-793-0347

Supervisor Burgelis Authors Citations to Honor LGBTQ+ Activists Janice Colby and Don Schwamb

MILWAUKEE – The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors honored impactful members of Milwaukee’s LGBTQ+ community with citations at its Thursday, June 23 meeting. County Supervisor Peter Burgelis authored [citations](#) for both Janice Colby and Don Schwamb.

“Janice Colby and Don Schwamb are pillars in Milwaukee’s LGBTQ+ community and have made a profound impact on so many lives with their work,” said Supervisor Burgelis.

“Janice Colby has spent decades providing love and support to Milwaukee’s LGBTQ+ community and has nurtured countless Milwaukeeans through her work with the House of Infiniti and Sisters Helping Each other Battle Adversity. Don Schwamb has been a pioneer in documenting and preserving the history of Milwaukee’s LGBTQ+ community. His work gives us a deeper understanding of Milwaukee’s LGBTQ+ history.

“My thanks go out to Supervisors Ryan Clancy, Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones, Willie Johnson, Jr., Patti Logsdon, Felesia A. Martin, Juan Miguel Martinez, Shawn Rolland, Steven Shea, Anthony Staskunas, Liz Sumner, Sequanna Taylor, Steve Taylor, Kathleen Vincent, Sheldon A. Wasserman, Dyango Zerpa and Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson for joining me in honoring two truly incredible Milwaukeeans.”

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors celebrated Pride Month at their June 23 meeting and have used Pride Month virtual backgrounds throughout June.

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WHEREAS, Don Schwamb began participating with LGBT organizations in 1972, with his most notable early involvement including, but not limited to, being an active member of the Gay People's Union (GPU), former President of the Cream City Foundation (CCF), former President of Milwaukee Gamma, co-founder of Milwaukee Guerilla Gay Bar, and founding Vice-President of the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW); and

WHEREAS, during the last 20 years, Don Schwamb directed his attention to documenting and preserving the history of Milwaukee's LGBT community, to ensure that future generations would know of Milwaukee's strong LGBT roots; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Don Schwamb began the Milwaukee LGBT History Project, which documented both his personal experiences and clippings from various Wisconsin LGBT periodicals, and transformed his passion project into a vast internet database and resource; and

WHEREAS, Don Schwamb felt it imperative to work with CCF, Milwaukee Gamma, and ARCW to ensure the permanent preservation of their archival records to the UW-Milwaukee LGBT archives collection; and

WHEREAS, Don Schwamb remains the sole programmer for the website, with Michael Takach providing necessary mainstream and historical research, they rebirthed the archives into the Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project and procured funding from Cream City Foundation to aid in its longevity; and

WHEREAS, Don Schwamb has been regarded as a Milwaukee LGBT Historian by countless news outlets including, but not limited to, WTMJ, WITI, Milwaukee PBS, and Shepherd Express; and

WHEREAS, Don Schwamb will continue to voluntarily provide individuals across the country with a deeper understanding of Milwaukee's LGBT history through his website Wisconsin LGBTQ History Project; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the members of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, on the motion of Supervisor Peter Burgelis, along with Supervisors Ryan Clancy, Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones, Willie Johnson, Jr., Patti Logsdon, Felesia A. Martin, Juan Miguel Martinez, Shawn Rolland, Steven Shea, Anthony Staskunas, Liz Sumner, Sequanna Taylor, Steve Taylor, Kathleen Vincent, Sheldon A. Wasserman, and Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson, do hereby commend Don Schwamb for his many dedicated contributions to preserving Milwaukee's LGBT history, and wish him future filled with health, happiness, and continued prosperity in all his personal and professional endeavors.



Marcelia Nicholson

Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
June 23, 2022

Peter Burgelis

Peter Burgelis, Supervisor
Milwaukee County Board, District 15
June 23, 2022



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WHEREAS, Janice Colby is an African American trans elder, who has been a guiding light and support system for young, Black trans women in Milwaukee; and

WHEREAS, Janice Colby has been an active member of the Milwaukee drag and transgender activism community for decades; and

WHEREAS, despite being a constant source of love in Milwaukee's LGBTQ community, Janice Colby has never held a formal role or title in a community organization; and

WHEREAS, in all her years of fighting for the trans youth of Milwaukee, Janice Colby has never formally been recognized for any of her contributions to nurture Milwaukee's trans youth; and

WHEREAS, Janice Colby has never been deterred by this and has always been regarded as an "Auntie" to the countless Black transgender women in Milwaukee she has supported and loved to help them all live and work in their Truth; and

WHEREAS, Janice Colby is a remarkably humble woman, but fierce performer and iconic former member of the House of Infiniti; and

WHEREAS, Janice Colby is a 20-year active member of Sisters Helping Each other Battle Adversity (SHEBA) at Diverse and Resilient which is a group of powerful Black sisters who support and empower one another, and share their joys, struggles, and healing- and lift each other up; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the members of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, on the motion of Supervisor Peter Burgelis, along with Supervisors Ryan Clancy, Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones, Willie Johnson, Jr., Patti Logsdon, Felesia A. Martin, Juan Miguel Martinez, Shawn Rolland, Steven Shea, Anthony Staskunas, Liz Sumner, Sequanna Taylor, Steve Taylor, Kathleen Vincent, Sheldon A. Wasserman, and Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson, do hereby commend Janice Colby for her many contributions to Milwaukee's community of powerful Black trans women, and wish her a future filled with health, happiness, and continued prosperity in all of her personal and professional endeavors.



Marcelia Nicholson

Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
June 23, 2022

Peter Burgelis

Peter Burgelis, Supervisor
Milwaukee County Board, District 15
June 23, 2022

